

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 9-18, and 20 are pending. Claims 5 and 6 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1-4, 9-18 and 20 are rejected. Claims 11-15 are allowable, but objected to. Claim 1 is amended and claim 16 cancelled. The specification is also amended, to further distinguish reference numerals 15 and 22, in accordance with the suggestion at paragraph 5 of the Office Action dated March 12, 2003. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the application, for example at pages 4-5 of the specification and in the claims as originally filed. No new matter is added. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 11-15 are allowable, but objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicant respectfully submits that the objection is moot in view of the remarks and amendments included herein. Applicant urges withdrawal of all objections.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 1-4, 9-18 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection is moot in view of the remarks and amendments included herein. Applicant urges withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1, 9, 17-18 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Krajicek (U.S. Patent No. 4,852,210).

Claims 1, 10 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Thomas (U.S. Patent No. 3,465,377).

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Garcia (U.S. Patent No. 5,419,015).

It is alleged that each of the cited references disclose gripping and manipulating means that are considered to be interchangeable, as in the claimed invention.

Applicant respectfully disagrees. The present invention as set forth in claim 1 concerns a multifunction plate for a surface cleaner, comprising a plate of a rectangular shape, provided with gripping and manipulating means, as well as with means for securing pieces of textile, characterised in that said gripping and manipulating means, between a broom-stick or a holding handle and a central rod connected to the plate, are interchangeable, and capable of clipping or snap fastening the broom stick or handle, and in that there are a plurality of means for fixing different types of pieces of textile to the plate, said fixing means being at least one of the following: on a lower base of the plate, plane portions for self-gripping strips; on an upper face of the plate, at least clamping mechanisms co-operating with windows or cavities in the plate to hold the types of pieces of textile having turned-back edges, and holes suitable for press stud systems for fixing clips.

Applicant therefore submits that the cited references, alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the claimed invention. Applicant submits that all of the cited references fail to teach or suggest any gripping and manipulating means that are interchangeable, in the convenient way envisioned by the claimed invention. Applicant points out, for example, that no combination of the cited references teaches or suggests “gripping and manipulating means, between, a broom stick or a holding handle and a central rod connected to the plate, [that] are interchangeable, and capable of clipping or snap fastening the broom stick or handle,” as claimed. Clearly, neither the joint assembly 6 and 7 of Krajicek, the joint assembly 3 of Thomas, nor the joint assembly 25 of Garcia constitute gripping and manipulating means that are interchangeable and capable of clipping or snap fastening a broom stick or handle, as claimed. Therefore, in that the cited references fail to teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention, Applicant urges withdrawal of the rejections.

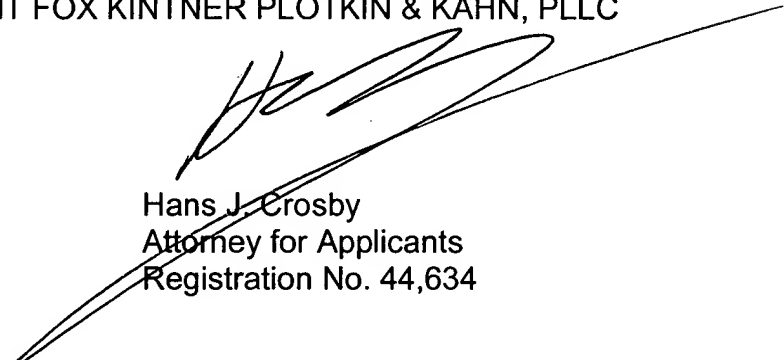
Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 2-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Krajicek in view of Nichols et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,642,837). Applicant respectfully points out that claims 2-4 are dependent on claim 1. As discussed above, claim 1 is allowable, since Krajicek and the other cited references fail to teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention. Nichols et al. fails to cure the deficiencies of Krajicek and other cited references. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claims 2-4 are allowable by virtue of at least their dependency on allowable claim 1, and urges withdrawal of all rejections.

In view of the amendments and remarks above, Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance and request favorable action thereon.

In the event this paper is not timely filed, Applicant hereby petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The fee for this extension may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 01-2300, along with any other additional fees, which may be required with respect to this paper, refereeing Attorney Docket No. 100210-00001.

Respectfully submitted,
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